

## MONTANA STATE PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: December 19, 2013

Agenda Item: Draft Fish Creek State Park Management Plan

**Division:** Parks

**Action Needed:** Proposed

**Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation**: 15 minutes

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**Background**: Fish Creek State Park was acquired by Montana FWP in 2010 in conjunction with the surrounding Fish Creek Wildlife Management Area. At 5,603 acres, Fish Creek State Park is the largest park in western Montana with strong potential to provide a unique experience within the state park system that could include diverse camping opportunities and a high quality non-motorized and motorized trail system. The Park also has potential to draw visitors to the region as a recreation destination, and provide economic development opportunities for Mineral County. The Draft Management Plan develops a vision for Fish Creek State Park over the next 10 years and provides guidance for all aspects of park operations, including public safety, recreation management, facilities and services, tourism and economic development, interpretation and education, and natural and cultural resource management.

**Public Involvement Process & Results:** The Fish Creek State Park Draft Management Plan was developed internally by Parks staff with input from agency partners, including FWP Fish and Wildlife Divisions, U.S. Forest Service, Dept. of Natural Resources and Conservation, Glacier Country Tourism, and Mineral County Commissioners. Following Board approval of the proposed Draft Management Plan, public comment will be solicited starting on December 20, 2013 for 35 days through January 24, 2014. Public meetings will be hosted in Superior and Missoula in early January. Public feedback will be analyzed and incorporated into the Draft Plan as determined applicable, and a final plan will be presented to the Board at the February 2014 Board meeting.

**Alternatives and Analysis:** The following alternatives for approval and resulting actions are:

<u>Alternative 1:</u> Not approve the proposed Draft Fish Creek State Park Management Plan for public review, pending any additional review/discussion deemed necessary.

<u>Alternative 2:</u> Approve the proposed Draft Fish Creek State Park Management Plan for public review, solicit public comment, and present the Final Fish Creek State Park Management Plan at the February 2014 meeting.

**Agency Recommendation & Rationale**: State Parks staff recommends the Board authorize the Parks Division to solicit public comment on a proposed Draft Fish Creek State Park Management Plan for review and final consideration at the February 2014 Board meeting.

**Proposed Motion:** I move that the Board approve the Parks Division to seek public comment for the proposed Draft Fish Creek State Park Management Plan for 35 days starting from December 20 to January 24, and present the final plan at the February 2014 Board meeting.